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WASHINGTON, DC- U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon today announced that the Greater Lafourche Port Commission would receive a \$600,000 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration for improvements to the South Lafourche Leonard J. Miller, Jr. Airport in Galliano, Louisiana. The airport is a major support facility for nearby Port Fourchon, which has dramatically expanded in recent years to serve the booming energy industry on the Gulf Coast.

**"The South Lafourche Airport plays a vital role for businesses in South Louisiana,"** said Melancon.

**□ "These much-needed upgrades will help our economy grow by allowing companies to transport people and goods quicker and more efficiently."**

"As Port Fourchon increases in significance as a major energy service hub, expanding the South Lafourche Airport will help us meet our nation's energy needs," said Ted Falgout, Director of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission.

The grant will fund phase II of a three part project to improve the airport's runway so that it can accommodate larger aircraft. In phase I, which has already been completed, the runway was extended by 1200 feet and widened by 25 feet. Phase II, which should be completed by the end of 2006, will install lighting on the extension. The final phase of the project, strengthening the runway, will be completed next year.

The expansion project was initiated by the Greater Lafourche Port Commission after companies in the region identified the need for adequate air services in close proximity to Port Fourchon and Galliano in order to transport specialized equipment in "just-in-time" fashion. Enhancing the runway will also help the public in the event of a natural disaster or national crisis.

For more information, please contact the Greater Lafourche Port Commission at (985) 632-6701.

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